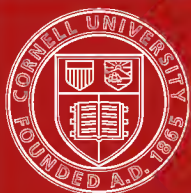


The Rubyiat of a Freshman

PS
3545
I92
R8

by
H. C. WITWER



Cornell University Library

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY



3 1924 068 300 858

2115

The Rubyat of a Freshman

by
H. C. WITWER

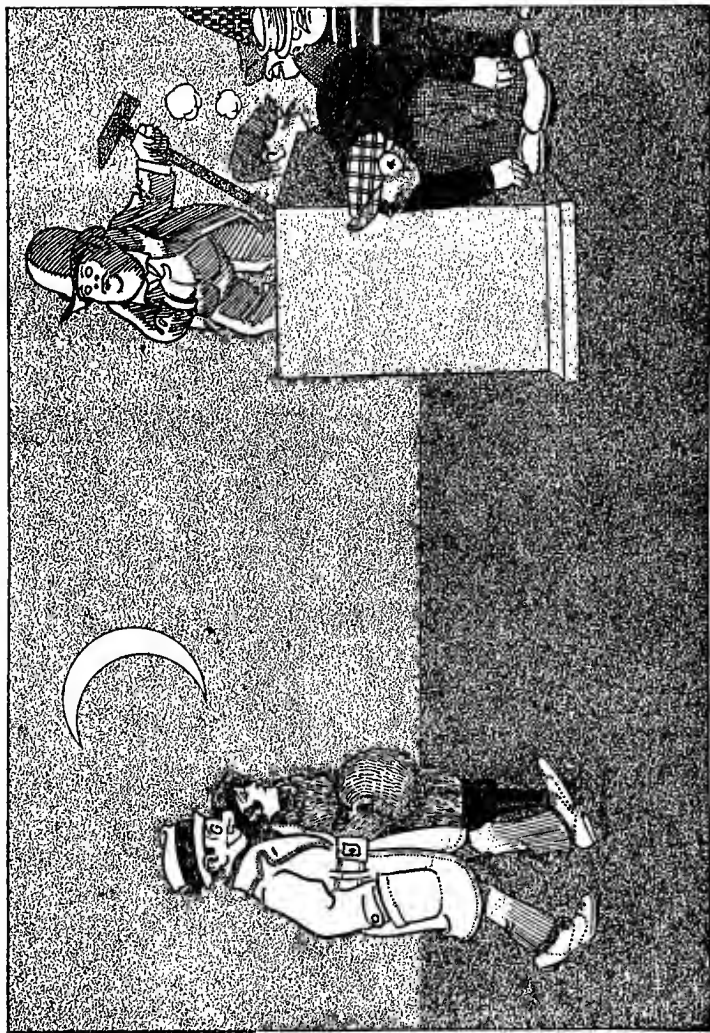


The Collegiate World
Publishing Company
CHICAGO

Copyright 1921 by

The Collegiate World Publishing Company

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



"As she and me passed O'Goldstein's Monument the thugs were to attack us."

(See Page 45)

The Rubyat of a Freshman

First Semester: Sociology, Money and Banking

Enroute Hoorah College.

Dear Pater:

Well, in a few more hours I'll be standing before the portals of dear old Hoorah, where I'm to spend the worst part of the next four years, provided, of course, that nothing untoward occurs to your bankroll. You will be careful, won't you, Dad? You cannot imagine what a comfort it is to me to know that you were—er—tight across the chest, as Uncle Joe says laughingly, and saved your money so that I could begin putting it freely into circulation now. Of course, Dad, you may be sure that I will do that to the royal family's taste, as I realize I owe you the joy of knowing daily that your son is in a position to spend with a lavish hand and deny himself nothing. How your eyes will shine with pride when I send you next month's bills! I wish I could be there to share your pleasure, but perhaps it is better this way.

Coming out here on the train I met a fine bunch of fellows who are all going to Hoorah. One of them was "Bunny" Williams, the interscholastic sprint champion, and, pater, you would hardly believe how friendly and democratic he was with everyone, in spite of the fact that he is

The Rubyat of a Freshman

said to have done a hundred yards in less than nine seconds! He has already promised to teach me how to strike a heroic attitude and compose my features smilingly when I break the tape at the finish of a race, so that the photographs of the same will not show me strained and uncomfortable, as I naturally would be if I was not looking at the camera.

Then there is "Narrow" Hayden, a tall, slim, long-haired and poetic-looking fellow, who is a tortoise-shell spectacle addict and gives the external appearance of a gloomy grind and who was fired out of prep school either four or eighteen times for studying Snappy Stories instead of algebra and etc.

All the other fellows admitted being distinguished in one way or the other and of course I allowed my imagination to gambol about with theirs. The result was that lies flowed like water and if Ananias had been there he would probably have taken carbolic acid out of pure pique. The talk finally drifted to our fathers, some of which who art in Heaven, but on the whole many very complimentary remarks were made about our respective parents, considering the opportunity we had to knock. It seems that most of these fellows' masculine parents are associated with J. P. Morgan and Jack Rockefeller and the poorest of the lot is down to his last billion. They boasted in a gentlemanly way, if that can be done, about their ancestry, but, Dad, I made them all quit when I disclosed the fact that you operated a garage and automobile repair shop. They all looked awed at being in the company

The Rubyat of a Freshman

of the son of a direct descendant of Captain Kidd. In an effort to put them at their ease, I suggested an informal crap game. Well, Pater, to make a long story short (clever expression that and a bit new, what?) I was practically the host at this game and lost some of the hundred dollars you gave me—\$98.75 to be exact. So you can see that I am holding my end up in good shape and falling quite naturally into the ways of millionaires' progeny. I have made up my mind, Pater, that I will never disgrace you by acting as though I were poor, as you will readily see from the first bills I send you.

Apropos of "send," please send me \$150 at once, as I want to get some dancing pumps and other little accessories to my studies. You can charge the \$150 on somebody's repair bill under the head of "labor" as usual, you know.

Well, I will have to close now as "Narrow" Hayden has in some way become acquainted with two girls who are extremely easy to gaze upon and he is going to introduce me to them, although he doesn't know that yet. In my next letter I will tell you all about my studies, professors, quarters and all that sort of rot. So far, I like college life immensely!

Your affectionate son,

TOM.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

The Elite Garage & Repair Shop

562 Eighth Avenue

All Bills Payable the Minute You Get 'Em
If Our Work Pleases You Tell Others, If It Don't
Tell It to Sweeney!
Let Us Repair Your Car and You'll Never Take
It Anywhere Else

Dear Tom:

What's the idea of callin' me pater, and you must think I'm runnin' a counterfeitin' plant by the way you're goin' through the jack I give you. Them hundred bucks was supposed to last you the majority of this term and you will not get another nickel from me 'til you grab off a couple of prizes for tuition, algeometry or some of them classical studies, and that's that! The idea of a kid your age gamblin' for money. I am sendin' you to college to become a doctor or like that and not no crapshooter. I have told you a million times to lay off them crap games, as you don't seem to get the knack of holdin' one of the bones between your thumb and forefinger so's you can make a pass every time. Don't you dare get into any more of them African golf tourneys, at least not 'til I have sent you the loaded ivories with which I am wrongly accused of winnin' my garage.

I don't know what put it into your head that I am anxious for you to get rid of as much sugar as possible whilst you are a inmate of that college and you have got that part of it all wrong. In the contrary, I figured you could prob'ly no

The Rubyat of a Freshman

doubt get a job on the football nine or the like at a good salary and thusly pay your own ways through college. Only the other day I seen a picture in the paper entitled "Harvard's Gridiron Hopes" and the sons of some of the country's most comfortably fixed millionaires was in it. Now if them babies aint too stuck up to go to work at football and the etc. so's to make a honest livin' at college and not live on their father, they's no reason why **you** can't and will. You couldst pick up the gift of football as quick as the next one, Tom, as on your mother's side they was all athletics and from the way they was constantly knockin' me I'm sure they was the greatest hammer throwers in the world! On my side, Tom, we was more on indoor yachtin' than physical culture. Your Uncle Joe, which made that crack about me bein' tight, was the champion checker player of Wayne County, Pa., and he was the athletic of our family.

I am puttin' a money order for a hundred berries in this, which shows I am on the brinks of softenin' of the brain and you want to show some ingenuity in holdin' on to this, because it is the final donation, get me? Don't get in no arguments with them professors and the etc. like you do with me or they will give you the raspberry and if you get throwed out of college I will take your Uncle Joe's kindly advice and park you in a reform school and be done with it. Of course, Tom, I am only saying this in a fatherly way and for your own good and no such thought ever entered my mind, but at the same time, Tom, don't get the idea that I wouldn't do it.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

Well, be good and remember your poor father never got no college education and as a result has got to pay a income tax, the figures of which sounds like the English population of London!

Your father (where d'ye get that "pater" stuff?),

PATRICK FRANCIS CULLEN.

(Radiators Fixed a Specialty. Not Responsible
for Limousine Bodies Left on Cars Being
Repaired.)

LOGIC, FINANCE AND GREEK

Hoorah College.

Dear Pater:

Your interesting and special delivery letter reached me something more than a few moments ago and I am so anxious to answer it at once that I am not even waiting to read it. The money order for a hundred dollars which you had the good judgment to enclose was certainly a big surprise. I expected \$200. However, it is all gone anyway, pater, therefore I am in a position to take my disappointment philosophically, as no matter *what* amount you had sent me it would also be gone, so as a matter of fact I could really credit you with having sent me

The Rubyat of a Freshman

\$1,000,000 rather than \$100, being broke anyway. This is what is known as "Logic," pater. It is a rather intricate study, if you know what I mean, but you can see I am already proficient at it, though I have scarcely been here long enough to learn the yell.

While on the absorbing study of logic, pater, I have given a great deal of thought to the annoying problem of my being continually in a state of *insufficientus fundus*, as we Latin scholars remark, and I have hit on what I think is a happy solution. It is, of course, quite humiliating to me to have to write incessantly to anyone's father, let alone my own, for money. Yet one must have one's pieces-of-eight and as the French have it, "*Alpha beta gamma delta?*" So therefore, if you will open a modest checking account for me, say—oh—three or ten thousand dollars, I can handle my finances from this end without recourse to you, except in the event of overdrafts, which are naturally unavoidable.

It will probably interest you to know that I have instantly obeyed your command to lay aside the galloping dominoes while at college and that your belief that the science of crap shooting was not one of the studies here, is correct. I am saying this on the authority of the faculty. I'm sure also that you will be glad to hear that I have taken up stud poker in place of African golf and that brings us around to the hundred dollars you sent me. The boys here shake a wicked straight flush, pater, and that hundred had as much chance as a person would have going to Gehenna for the purpose of selling

The Rubyat of a Freshman

celluloid collars to the natives. After two hours of "deuces wild," I gave the winners an l. O. U. shower and resigned.

It is particularly annoying that I am broke now, pater, as I go to my first class in matriculation tomorrow and I have got to buy a book on Greek Tuition in order to pass the examination. I can get one at a second-hand book store here for \$175.00, so please send that amount at once as I would not like to get behind in my studies. You can be sure that I have learned my lesson in regard to gambling and will shun both cards and dice from now on. I have every confidence that you will come to my assistance, pater, and as an evidence of this I have laid odds of eight to five with a dozen or more fellows that the first mail will bring at least \$175.00 for the book on Greek Tuition and probably \$500.00 for my other and varied needs.

I have been sleeping at the Epsilon Omega Kappa Tau Sigma Delta House here, but in a few days I will be parked in a dormitory. I suppose you will no doubt ponder over what is the E. O. K. T. S. D., pater, so as I have already started on a fresh page I will explain. It is nothing less than a Greek fraternity, pater, which I belong to and it's about like the Elks or the Masons, only vastly different—if you know what I mean. I have already given twenty-two frat pins to as many co-eds, which is the highest honor a co-ed can get from any university, according to we boys.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

While I am disclosing the mysteries of college life, pater, I may as well explain what a co-ed is, too. A co-ed is what makes college absolutely painless and a welcome relaxation in a man's life. Also, pater, you can get more education from a co-ed in the course of a term than you can get from the college proper in forty years!

I am sending you a bill which was given to me personally by mistake this morning. It includes tuition, matriculation, athletic, literary society and dormitory fees and the figures on the bottom represent the total amount of the bill and not the roster of the college, as one might believe. When I come out of here at the expiration of four years, I will be the first full-fledged Bachelor of Arts in our family and you will be proud of me, pater, when I hang out my A. B. shingle and start in practice.

Well, avoirdupois, pater, and don't forget to tell me what you think of my checking account idea.

Your studious son,

TOM.

P. S. If you would wire me the \$750, think of the laugh I would have on the fellows here who have intimated that you are niggardly.

TOM.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

The Elite Garage & Repair Shop
562 Eighth Avenue

All Bills Payable the Minute You Get 'Em

**If Our Work Pleases You Tell Others, If It Don't
Tell It to Sweeney!**

**Let Us Repair Your Car and You'll Never Take
It Anywhere Else**

Dear Tom:

Well, I have got your letter, Tom, and I have been boilin' with rage for the last hour on the account of the same. It's only by the dumbest of luck that I didn't leap on a train and come up there and give you a lickin' you wouldst remember up to and includin' your dyin' day, not that I ever walloped a child of mine except in a playfully way. In the first place, get that idea about the checkin' account out of your head and they will be that much more room for common sense. I wouldst as soon let you compose your own checks as I wouldst go over to dear old Cork and holler "Down with McSwiney!" with a English accent. Here I am workin' my hands off all day long puttin' nickel plated radiators on Fords and sellin' the results as Rolls-Royce drummers' samples and you are blowin' in my sugar like I printed it myself. I fondly expected that the hundred berries I was silly enough to send you in my last letter wouldst last you until they give you a diploma or the like and yet you got the audac—audacit—audicat—eh, the nerve to tell me you are clean again! Well, Tom, I talked things over with myself and I have made up my mind to put you on a allowance from now on.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

In the other words, on the first of each and every month whilst you are a inmate of college, you will get from me the flatterin' sum of one hundred fish, which is identical to twenty-five bucks the week or \$24,000 every twenty years. They will be no use to send me no hot wires in between because I will turn a dumb ear to them. Whilst they are at it up there, you can get a bevy of them professors to teach you the art of livin' on that amount of dough. They will be no more from me and that's that!

So as you won't feel that I have cut you off from all the advantages which come to you on the account of you bein' a relative of mine by marriage, or in the other words, my son, I am goin' to give you some good sound advice. I have sent you up there to get a full fledge education which is somethin' I never had, so that when you come out dressed up in the sheeps skin I understand they furnish you with, you will be all set to stand the world on its ear and make it like it! Treat your professors with the same respect you had to give them little second lieutenants when the draft was all the rage, study your lessons and try to get some faintly idea of what it's all about up there, quit treatin' college like it was somethin' that was gave to you for Xmas to play with and don't give them co-ed's too strong a play. Whilst you didn't let fall no hints that them co-eds is members of the female race, I ain't so ignorant that I don't recognize the description you give of them. When I sent you up there I didn't know that girls was part of the variously studies, but nevers the less, we will have to make the best of it now. Anyhow, Tom, don't

The Rubyiat of a Freshman

be goin' around lyin' to them and tellin' them your father has got four dollars for every bone in a herrin' so as to make a impression and if by some chance you get maniacal enough to write them letters in which the words "sweet-heart" and "love" plays a important part, don't forget that few jurys has a sense of the romantic.

With the regards to the Greek Tuition book which you claim you can get second handed for \$175.00, I am herewith sendin' you \$176.00 so's you can get a new one. I don't want them millionaires' offspring up there to get the idea that your father is a tramp!

Your father,

PATRICK FRANCIS CULLEN.

P. S.—I am still waitin' to find out what you mean by callin' me "dear pater." I don't like to see you usin' slang and the like, Tom, you may not notice it yourself, but comin' from a college guy it sounds out of the place.

ATHLETICS—INCLUDING FOOTBALL AND LOVE

Hoorah College.

Dear Governor:

Well, pater, since you so strenuously object to me addressing you as "Pater" (which is really *recherche*, if you know what I mean), I have decided to try calling you "Governor" for a while and see how *that* will work out. I have observed

The Rubyat of a Freshman

that in nearly all the dramas of wild life in college, the dashing young hero always snappily calls his male parent "Guv'nor," at least until the big scene in Act II when father, the pillar of Wall Street, has become bereft of his bank account, via the ticker. Then, of course, all flippancy temporarily ceases while the hero enters in an immaculate football suit and walking over to where his rather careless and thoroughly ruined progenitor sits with bent head, he looks at the ingenue and says: "Dad, dear!" in a quavering voice.

But this, as you may notice, is all beside the point. Apart from the fact that I have nothing else to do, I am writing to thank you for sending me the \$176.00 for the book on Greek Tuition, which I had to have in order to pass my examinations in Matriculation. It may interest you to know that I was unable to get the book after all, although I searched practically all the big stores, such as Far & Wide, High & Low, Here & There, etc. However, I got through my exam with flying colors, getting the edifying mark of 158 when only 100 was required to pass.

I suppose you are wondering what became of the \$176.00 when I made the sensational discovery that I was unable to put it to the use you intended it for. Well, pater—er, my mistake!—governor, I have had two remarkable experiences since my last interesting letter to you. To be frank, I have fallen wildly in love and I have also made the football eight, or maybe it's twelve, I must look that up. I divided the money evenly, viz., \$6.00 for football (broken finger) and \$170.00 for love (ditto heart).

The Rubyiat of a Freshman

Malapropos of the football, of course, I am not a member of the uniVarsity team (the u, n and i are silent as in *roach*), I am playing with the Freshmen. I would not want you to get the two teams confused, governor, as occasionally, we Frosh *win* a game.

Before discarding this subject, will you kindly reach for your checkbook and scribble me a jolly old draft for, say, \$200? I will need that amount to complete my football equipment, as the college does not furnish the skis.

Well, governor, I will tell you how I secured a billet on the football team. It was really quite interesting. I was standing in the gym reading "The Art of High Diving," by Jess Willard, with an introduction by Bombardier Wells, the Annette Kellerman of the prize ring, when our genial and well liked coach came over and made me the cynosure of both his eyes.

"Play football?" he remarked abruptly.

"Oh, fluently!" I answered respectfully and with not a little gusto, while my heart beat against my ribs—er—as of course it naturally does.

"What position do you play in?" he inquired rather skeptically.

"Why—er—bent a bit from the hips," I said, "—sort of stooped over and—"

"One of them small town comics, hey?" grunted our coach, or vice versa, "Well, we'll fix that part of it all up. Get a suit and report to the squad on South Field!"

The Rubyat of a Freshman

And turning on his heel he strode away, while the other fellows who had apparently constricted their lungs during my controversy with the coach, resumed breathing and stared at me as though I were a condemned criminal on my way to the gibbet.

Well, governor, I got caparisoned in a football costume and reported for practice as advertised. The first lesson lasted one hour, at which point I claimed exemption. The coach took a flattering interest in me from the very start and appointed me tackling dummy, insisting upon me carrying the ball the length of the field time after time, while the other fellows had to be content with hurling themselves upon me as I swept by. When my head was the only bone in my body that wasn't bruised and sprained, I was allowed to retire. Later we had practice in passing the buck—or the ball, I believe they call it—running down punts, learning signals, falling on the ball, falling on the ground and fumbling. At the last two, I excelled.

Oh, by the way, the broken finger that I mentioned, I sustained in attempting to remove a nose guard.

However, I made the team, getting the portfolio of fullback. We have played one game since I've been fullbacking, clashing with Siss Boom Ah University. The final score was 85 to 85, in favor of us. I am enclosing a clipping from "Who's Who in America" which will give you all the details of the struggle.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

It was right after this game, governor, that I met the sweetest little girl in all the world. She has promised to be my bride, ten years after I graduate and have built up a flourishing business as a Bachelor of Arts. So that I have only to wait until 1934, but when I think of how long the Democrats will have to wait, governor, it seems as nothing!

No doubt you will want to know your future daughter-in-law's name, governor, and dash it all, I have forgotten to ask her! However, in my next letter I will probably be able to tell you. I am putting a memo to ask her this rather leading question, in my dancing pumps, where I will be sure to see it.

In glancing carelessly over this letter before mailing it, I note that I have forgotten to enclose the clipping in re the football game, so you will have quite a few things to look forward to in my next.

And, oh yes—the \$176.00. As I said before, six dollars of this went to a colleague who is studying botany, for setting my finger. Well, the trifling \$170.00 that remained was a sacrifice at the altar of the well and favorably known God of Love, to wit, Cupid, and if you could see the engagement ring you would be the first to agree with me that I got a bargain. Then again, it was darn decent of the local jeweler to accept a sum as small as that for an initial payment and give me a full week to pay the balance of \$500. So please send that amount at once, governor, as I am sure neither of us would want to have me put in jail—I, for one, am against it. I know

The Rubyat of a Freshman

when you see Miss—er—hang it!—Miss—ah—eh—well, this vision of loveliness who has suddenly come into my life, ostensibly from Heaven, you will chide me for not buying her something expensive rather than giving her the impression that I am a piker. An impression, I may add, that I hope to remove within the next few weeks with your co-operation.

Your infatuated son,

Tom.

59RS MT NIGHT LETTER

RJ NEW YORK NY 12PM

NOV 15 1920

TOM CULLEN

HOORAH COLLEGE

MEET NINE PM EXPRESS I AND LAWYER
WILL BE ON IT GET RING FROM VAMP
ALSO ALL CUCKOO LETTERS AND PITCH-
ERS OF YOU WITH IDIOTICALLY BUNK
WROTE ON BACK WHAT DO YOU MEAN
BY GETTING ENGAGED I SENT YOU TO
COLLEGE TO GET BRAINS NOT JANES.

POP.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

FRENCH AND FEMININITY

Hoorah College.

Dear *Père*:

Well, I have just come from my French class where I found out for one thing that *entre nous* doesn't mean "Come in!" as I always thought it did, and also that *L'homme* does not stand for one's residence. But really, pater, the French language is not half as hard to master as I feared it would be. It's twice as hard! Most of their nouns, adjectives, verbs and etc are pronounced almost the same as ours, but they have a quaint habit of adding additional letters to them which mean nothing. For instance, they spell pork thus "*pourquoi*," mercy with an "i" instead of the conventional "y" and raiment is "*vraiment*." The plural pronoun we is "*oui*" in French and May is "*mais*." For example: "*May et I in proper vraiment went into a restaurant where oui ate pourqoui chops without merci*."

Silly, isn't it?

But all French aside, pater, I am rather glad that you broke up that incipient love affair between myself and Miss——ah——eh——dash it all, I've forgotten her name again! I refer to the bewitching female to whom I gave the diamond ring with the \$176.00 you had sent me for the book on Greek Tuition. It is true that for a time I was mad about her—that is, mad about her refusal to return the ring, but I called at her home yesterday as you directed and got it. So,

The Rubyat of a Freshman

pater, you may rest assured that I am cured of my desire to wed her and perhaps it was for the best all around, as I would be foolish to think seriously of matrimony before I have built up my practise as Bachelor of Arts, eh pater?

Speaking of B. A. immediately calls to mind—to mine at least—Bank Account and, pater, like the once Democratic Party, mine is all shot to pieces. The meagre two hundred berries (Montenegrin for dollars, pater) you left with me when you came up here and busted my romance was absolutely wiped out by the purchase of Xmas gifts and if it were not in bad taste I wouldn't hesitate to tell you that the smoking jacket I gave you cost something less than \$100.00 alone. However, what's done is done and as the French have it "*Nous denous anous nous!*" So if you will ship me a hundred at once, I will not trouble you again until my next letter.

Now you will probably wonder how it is that I need funds, when I was supposed to return the ill-fated engagement ring to the jeweler and get back the money I had paid for it. Well, pater, by an odd coincidence I have not yet taken the gem back to the—eh—gemmer. As a matter of fact, it only remained in my possession a scant half hour, after what I had been led to believe was my future bride, returned it. There is quite a little story connected with this, pater, and with your permission I will here set forth the facts which are roughly, viz; pursuant (nifty word that, what?) pursuant to your command, I notified Miss—er—Miss X over the phone that due to unforeseen complications in the form of parental

The Rubyat of a Freshman

objections, our more or less charming romance was void until further notice and that I would call for my pledge of troth, to wit, the ring, within the hour. I do not think it necessary, pater, to record her immediate remarks here, as there is a chance that they might irritate you or any one's father and besides I am not quite ready to concede that I am three or four of the—eh—things she called me. However, I arrived at the *chalet* (Broad "i" as in water, pater) I arrived at the *chalet* as advertised and was ushered into the drawing room by a female Ethiopian and shortly thereafter a soft step was heard in the hall. Pater, my heart began to throb spasmodically, approximately like this—pitty pat, pitty pat, pat! Rather cute that, eh pater? Get the swing?—pitty pat, pitty pat, pitt—but to continue, when I heard the soft step in the hall my courage oozed like—er—well, whatever is in the habit of oozing, and it occurred to me what a brute I was to break this dear little girl's trusting heart, simply because you refused to approve of my rather modest wish to get married. For a moment I resolved to defy you, pater, felt quite heroic and looked it—as I noticed by glancing at myself in a pier glass which helped to decorate the room. Then the portieres softly parted and a vision such as—pater, I wish you could have seen this hashish eater's dream as she entered that room and I know your objections would vanish like—er—my allowance, for example. I have gone through Roget, Webster and the musical comedy advertisements, four times without finding sufficient adjectives to describe her, so I will merely say that had this banquet to the eye been current in the time of Marc Anthony, Marc would

The Rubyat of a Freshman

have given Cleopatra the raspberry, if you know what I mean. Oh, pater, what a sweet damsel she is!

Well, she sat down on the chaise longue—whatever **that** is!—beside me, quite properly I assure you, and extending the ring to me in its original package, she murmured a few well assorted conventional regrets, to which I replied in kind, striving manfully to keep my voice normal although the blood was fairly galloping through my veins. To cover our mutual embarrassment and ease the strain of an extremely delicate situation, we discussed various impersonal topics such as love, Cupid, diamonds, engagements and matrimony. The upshot of it all was, pater, that before I left I had taken the ring from the box and placed it on her finger, following hard on several chaste salutes. So, pater, here I am engaged again—fancy that!

But I have not disobeyed you. I got the ring from Miss X as you commanded, although she was so angry she refused to see me personally and sent her sister down to me with the bauble instead. The net result is that I am now engaged to said sister as described above.

Her name is Agnes, meaning chaste.

Pater, if you could only imagine how—woof!
—words fail me!

Your affectionate son,

TOM.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

The Elite Garage & Repair Shop

562 Eighth Avenue

All Bills Payable the Minute You Get 'Em
If Our Work Pleases You Tell Us, If It Don't,
Tell It to Sweeney
Let Us Repair Your Car and You'll Never Take
It Anywhere Else!

Dear Tom:

It's a luckily thing for you that I am still full of the Xmas spirit (Don't worry, I made sure that this was bonded stuff!) or I wouldst come up there once again and run you ragged. It seems that in your case this B. A. thing will mean "Boob Allover" and instead of gettin' better as you get older, like wine, you get worse, like eggs! I am not a young man no more and kinnot be runnin' hithers and yon about the country keepin' you from playin' a practical joke on some female by marryin' her. I can only say this; that the minute you get wed I will cut you off without a nickel, so you better try and marry into the Rockefeller family whilst you are at it!

As for the smokin' jacket you sent me, I needed that sixty-two colored crazy quilt, Tom, the same way I need a third ear. I do most of my smokin' right here in the old garage and if you think I'm gonna crawl under a car with that Bullshevik flag on my back, then you also think that Niagara Falls is composed of Bevo. If you wanna gimme a Xmas present which I will appreciate, lay off gettin' engaged and quit sendin' for

The Rubyat of a Freshman

money and I'll actually believe they is a Santy Claus.

As for this Agnes, which means chased, they is no doubt she will be chased as I expect to visit you again in a couple of weeks and I will do the chasin', after I have got back your ring. You meet more schemin' vampires in a month, apparently, than a movie director does in a year!

I am enclosin' a blank signed check and you will notice they is no amount filled in. Well, Tom, I will not put in the amount 'til you show me you can save some money. The old man fooled you this time, hey?

POP.

INTERCOLLEGIATE SPORTS, INCLUDING POETRY

Hoorah College.

Dear Pater:

Well, dad, you will undoubtedly be overjoyed to hear that I am once again "heart whole and fancy free" as Hooziss, the poet, says. Last evening I handed Cupid his passports, severing all diplomatic relations with the charming but slightly fickle Agnes Kimo. Alas and a lackaday for love's young dream, eh, pater? I am to call for our pledge of troth, to-wit, the engagement ring, tonight and will also get my letters, which Agnes has promised to have ready for me, packed in lots of fifty. Having nothing else to think

The Rubyat of a Freshman

about, of course you remember, pater, that I had originally arranged to take up the holy bonds of matrimony with Mystica, the sister of the above mentioned Agnes and would have gone through with my part of it had it not been for you. In your night letter at the time you spoke of disinheriting me if I became a groom before leaving college and opening up an office as a successful Bachelor of Arts. So reading between the lines and acting upon this subtle hint of yours, pater, I cancelled all games I had scheduled with the young lady for the remainder of the season.

As you jolly well know, pater, when I went around to get my ring Mystica refused to see me, but sent the costly bauble downstairs with her sister Agnes. The latter proved to be a vision of lovely femininity such as is rarely seen by any one but an opium fiend after his eighteenth pipe, so drying my tears I took from her the ring I had given Mystica and as there was nowhere else to put it I hauled off and placed it on her own quivering finger—thus becoming engaged to my whilom fiancée's sister. A bit erotic, eh, dad? lbsenesque, what?

Ah me and etc., here I am—er—unattached again, pater, yet since the pulchritudinous (Woof!) Agnes promised to be my bride seems but a couple of days ago. As a matter of fact, that's all it is! And to think that five years from next Washington's Birthday we would have been married a week.

So that you will not die in convulsions from curiosity, pater, I will immediately relate the incidents of last night that led up to my now fa-

The Rubyat of a Freshman

mous break with Agnes Kimo. As you know, I have gone in for the more manly athletics here with my usual enthusiasm, throating a nasty tenor on the Glee Club and shaking a vicious hoof on our dancing team. Well, last night the Intercollegiate Shimmy Contest with Goofy University was staged at the Hotel Egram. When I called to escort my then fiancée to the annual classic, she boasted of a headache—the result of having studied until 4 a. m. the previous morning. Pater, Agnes is not the first co-ed I have heard complain about the small print in Snappy Stories. However, Agnes begged to be excused, adding that if I was really saturated with love for her, I would also remain at home—that is, my *own* home. I said I would, so we had that all settled.

About half past eight o'clock on this fateful evening, after I had paced the floor of my room between 2900 and 4600 times, wondering how the tide of battle was going as the panting dancers wrestled back and forth on the polished floor, while thousands of Hoorah College and Goofy University adherents cheered them on (Rather a long sentence this, as the life-termer twitted the judge) I got a premonition, pater, Something told me that I should go at once to the Hotel Egram. So strong was the feeling, that I grabbed my hat and coat and rushed out of my room at once—stopping only to call at the house of a certain fascinating young lady with whom I have been trying out a Platonic friendship. I implored her to accompany me to the shimmy tournament, as I feared if I went alone I might be carried away by the excitement and leap into the

The Rubyat of a Freshman

fray, thus cracking my vow to Agnes. I managed to gain my platonic friend's consent and as I had impressed upon her the necessity of speed, she was back at my side in less than three hours in a dazzling decollete that displayed her—er—utter disregard for pneumonia. Pater, I think it was then that it first struck me that I had been a trifle hasty in getting engaged to Agnes. A man should look around a bit and—but to continue, we reached the Hotel Egram and were pushing through the milling crowd to the dancing arena, when a couple bumped violently against us. I caught a whiff of a familiar perfume—Spearment—and I looked up square into the startled eyes of my fiancee, who was supposed to be home in bed with a headache! Agnes Kimo's face turned as crimson as—er—\$46.00 worth of catsup.

"What are you doing here?" she gasped.

"What are you doing here?" I gasped.

"Who is this woman?" she demanded, evading my question.

"Who is this man?" I demanded, evading her question.

With a shrug of her gleaming white shoulders, Agnes calmly turned and introduced her escort, a goofy looking, long haired fathead entitled "Patrick Longfellow Goldstein." I recalled this fellow, pater, as the author of "How to Kill An Oyster," the poem which is alleged to have in-

The Rubyat of a Freshman

spired the Russo-Japanese War. To digress a moment, I give it here from memory—the poem, not the war, pater:

HOW TO KILL AN OYSTER

Don't drown him in vinegar
Or cover him at all
With nasty salt and pepper
All over, like a pall,
But grab him by his shiney eye
And gently hold your breath
Whilst with your eager, trembling, tongue—
Just tickle him to death!

Now, pater, can you imagine a girl with the intelligence Agnes Kimo must have had when she got engaged to *me*, falling for a goof that would commit anything like the above?

So tonight, pater, I will go around and get my ring from Agnes. As Adam remarked, I will never trust another woman as long as I live and my charming platonic friend, whom I hope some day to make my—but anyhow, pater, *she* says she doesn't blame me a bit!

Your affectionate son and all that sort of thing,

TOM.

P. S.—Please send me \$150 at once as I have joined the tennis eleven and I have to furnish my own brassies.

TOM.

The Rubyiat of a Freshman

The Elite Garage & Repair Shop

562 Eighth Avenue

All Bills Payable the Minute You Get 'Em
If Our Work Pleases You Tell Us, If It Don't
Tell It to Sweeney

Let Us Repair Your Car and You'll Never Take
It Anywhere Else!

Dear Tom:

Your letter at hand and contents noted and in reply wouldst beg to say when in the # \$ % & ! are you gonna write me a letter in which they is some slightly hint with the regards to how are you gettin' along with your studies, instead of bein' fill up with your idiotical love affairs and the like? I did not send you to college to see can you bust Solomon's record as a lady killer, nor have I got the faintest intentions of pensionin' off the fair winners of no breach of promise tournaments. I work hard for my jack as you well know and with the price of Flivver parts wholesale jumped from 38 cents for radiators to four bits flat and rear ends now sellin' at \$1.45 at the factory, they is barely sixty percent profit in handlin' the tinware!

They is never a word in your letters as to what marks are you gettin' in tuition, matriculation, insomnia, algeometry, diphtheria, etc.—nothin' but dancin' and girls, dancin' and girls!

Now I have prepared a few simple questions which I want you to answer in your next letter so's I can get some kind of a line on how college has affected your brains. If you can't answer them correctly, they is no use of you wastin'

The Rubyiat of a Freshman

teacher's time and my jack up there and I will bring you back and put you to work in the garage, dopin' the gas with kerosene and makin' medium oil out of molasses and boiled fat. Here is the sample questions:

1—State in round numbers the capitol of Yonkers.

2—Is they any swimmin' at Rex Beach?

3—If a man had 398 apples and sold the lot for a profit of 9 cents, how much was the price of each?

4—In what part of the United States is the Eighteenth Amendment in effect?

5—What is the difference between a Prohibition Enforcement Agent and Bootlegger? (This don't refer to the current prices demanded by each, or their respectively sales records.)

Yours truly,

POP.

SECOND SEMESTER: ECONOMICS, BOXING

Hoorah College,

Dear Dad:

Well, I have quite a surprise for you, as David remarked to Goliath. Hoorah College has added boxing to its athletic curriculum, pater, and I have therefore decided to cease getting head-aches studying the trade of Bachelor of Arts. Instead, I've taken up the profession of remodeling human features on living subjects, to wit, pugilism, and

The Rubyat of a Freshman

I expect some day to be heavyweight champion of the wide, wide world—provided the bridge of my nose and my ears hold out.

Dad, I have given the matter of changing my career the same amount of careful consideration that the average bartender has and I've reached the conclusion that we are living in an age where learning is about as necessary to one as a third eye in the eternal struggle for fame and fortune. For example, Jack Dempsey, who don't know whether Virgil was a race horse or a tooth paste, got more money and notoriety for knocking this George Carpenter for a goal than a college professor gets in a life time. The average top notch prize fighter makes about thrice as much jack, as the faculty would call it, as the President of the United States in a year. Moving picture stars could pay off Congress every week and never miss the money and besides, look at the—eh—fun they have! But all jokes aside, Dad, which would you rather be—a Mack Sennett director issuing orders to Phyliss Haver or Marie Prevost and getting paid in the vicinity of \$1,500 a *week* for it, or the occupant of the chair of chemistry, for instance, at some gloomy university issuing orders to a lot of fatheads for \$1,500 a *year*? Come now, pater, which would you choose?

That's exactly the way I feel, too!

But to return to boxing, pater, as I say I have dropped the study of bright books for the study of right hooks and whilst on this subject, you had better send me three hundred smackers as I will have to have my nose re-set again and I am be-

The Rubyat of a Freshman

ginning to feel a bit silly with four of my front teeth reposing in my vest pocket. Also, I have discovered a doctor here who thinks that a few minor operations upon my once woman-killing features will at least fix them up so that the co-eds will cease scurrying about the campus with shrill cries of alarm at sight of me. I'm afraid that a couple of my ears, however, will be permanently mistaken for cauliflowers by the near sighted.

No doubt, pater, you are thinking that I must have put too many raisins in the last batch with the result that some of the bottles exploded, thus accounting for the slight injuries listed above. Nothing of the sort, pater. In the first place, I have too much respect for our punch-drunk Constitution to violate any of its amendments and in the second place, we boys up here have found a couple of perfectly respectable cafes where they are still—eh—taking a chance. As a matter of fact, I acquired such marks of my prospective profession as I have mentioned, during the course of my first lesson from our fisticuff instructor, Professor Knockout McGurk, J. A. B., H. O. O. K., and S. L. A. M., late of Pork and Bean University.

I believe I informed you in my last *communiqué* that I had severed my engagement to Agnes Kimo, sister of the girl I once intended to make your daughter-in-law. Well, I went around the other eve and obtained my ring without any undue violence or bloodshed and afterwards I called upon Blanche Mange, a little platonic co-ed friend of mine who would have made

The Rubyat of a Freshman

Adonis tear up Psyche's telephone number and send Venus back her letters! Ah me, pater, I did think for a time that I might drag Blanche right up to the altar and—eh—all that sort of rot, but my heart and your bankroll are safe once again. After my latest experience with the instability of the speaker sex, I am permanently blonde proof!

Bu what has all this applesauce got to do with my taking up the art of pugilism, you will say and I will answer that Blanche Mange was indirectly responsible for my turning from the lure of a Bachelor of Art's wild life to the prosaic existence of a champion prize fighter. The facts are roughly, as follows:

The night I called upon the pulse-quickenning Blanche, who is an incurable movie addict, pater, she suggested that we go to see Fairless Dougbanks in his latest reflection upon the adult intelligence, entitled, "Fun in the Morgue." Well, pater, from the minute the handsome screen star appeared on the screen, I could have been in Siberia as far as Blanche was concerned. I even lost her hand, which she had snuggled into mine during the showing the "News Weekly." Every time Fairless Dougbanks foiled the eight or nine hundred villains in the picture, Blanche would lean forward in her seat, her bosom heaving tumultuously, her breath coming in short gasps and her eyes half closed while she murmured ecstatically, "Oh, isn't he simply wonderful!"

The big stiff!

Well, anyhow, pater, on the way back from the theatre after we have knocked off a choco-

The Rubyat of a Freshman

late nut sundae apiece—just enough to get a mild kick, you understand—Blanche continued to rave about what a super-hero Fairless Dougbanks was and pretty soon my nerves were rasping against each other until the noise caused passersby to stare after me curiously.

"Think of one man, alone and single-handed, vanquishing a dozen armed bandits as Fairless did in the second reel!" exclaimed Blanche. "Think of—"

"That's nothing!" I interrupted testily, "nothing at all. Any man who calls himself a man could do the same thing. Six armed bandits wouldn't give me a thrill. Give me a couple of coco-cola's and I'd take on twenty brigands!"

Blanche sniffed skeptically, pater, and that was the ultimate straw. At that moment we were passing a pool room and about fifteen or twenty-eight young ruffians were hanging around outside. They were about the roughest looking bunch of potential gunmen that I ever saw anywhere—even in a jury box. I buttoned up my coat, pulled my cap down hard, tightened my belt and turned to the dumbfounded Blanche.

"Watch me, gal," I hissed, "I'll make Fairless Dougbanks look like a Shubert chorus man!"

With that, pater, I sailed into the no doubt astonished bunch of roughs, letting fly about me right merrily. . . . As I hit the pavement, I heard a woman scream.

A few moments later, pater, I pried open one eye and still in a reclining position, I identi-

The Rubyat of a Freshman

fied the scornful face of my whilom platonic friend Blanche amongst the various stars that wiggled and wobbled before me. She was surrounded by all of the roughs except two, who oddly enough, were sitting on me.

"He must have been drinking!" I heard her say in horrified tones.

"Either that, or he's a hophead," volunteered one of the thugs, cheerfully. "Don't be afraid, lady, we'll take care of this baby!" I noticed he wasn't a bad looking devil. "Want me to walk home with youse so's nothin' kin happen?" he added.

As in a dream, I heard Blanche whisper softly, "If you would!"

So that's how I came to take up boxing, pater, and Professor McGurk assures me that within a month I will be able to go back and thrash this fellow, who it developed later, is middleweight champion of the state.

A bit annoying to have found this last out so late, eh pater?

Your affectionate son,

TOM.

The Elite Garage & Repair Shop
562 Eighth Avenue

Dear Tom:

It seems that once a fool, always a fool, as Henry Ford says. Every letter I get from you is filled up with your adventures with the ladies and

The Rubyat of a Freshman

it looks like I might as well of sent you to Vassar and be done with it! I note you are taking up the study of box fightin'. That's fine. Maybe this guy McGurk can **beat** some sense into your head! I also note from your letter that you are missin' a few teeth and that your beak has got to be overhauled as the results of your first lesson from Professor Knockout McGurk. Enclosed you will find three hundred bucks. Take one hundred for yourself and give Professor McGurk the other two and my best regards. Be sure and don't miss the second lesson.

POP.

STRATEGY, FISTICUFFS

Hoorah College,

Dear Dad:

Well, pater, old bean, I am writing this *billet doux* (as the Abyssinians have it) under huge difficulties. One of my favorite eyes is as black as \$50,000 worth of coal, my lips are much puffier than the natty dresser is wearing them this year and my nose is as jovially red and swollen as a prohibition enforcement officer's. Also, every bone in my body, including the largest one, ie, my head, is aching like several hundred sore thumbs. Pater, old dear, when I first crashed into Hoorah College I thought football was a rough and tumble sport, but alongside of boxing the gridiron pastime is as mild as parcheesi!

The Rubyat of a Freshman

However, pater, you perfectly priceless old thing, in the course of acquiring the trifling scars listed above I succeeded in buffeting my way to a place on the freshman boxing team and next week we travel to Dumbell University to cross gloves with their exponents of the manly art of assault and battery. That we will knock those fellows stiff is a foregone conclusion everywhere—that is, everywhere except at Dumbell University. Professor Knockout McGurk, J. A. B., H. O. O. K., and S. L. A. M., who holds the Chair of Sockology here, is confident that I will personally account for first honors in at least the following divisions, to wit, needleweight, paperweight, flyweight, bantamweight, featherweight, lightweight, welterweight, middleweight, heavyweight and—er—etc.

You may recall, pater, that in my last letter I told you that after I had been rendered *du hors combat*, as the Esquimaux say, by the exceedingly champion professional middleweight pugilist of the state, I decided to add boxing to the other 185 courses I am taking here. Also, pater, unless you have lost your mind, you likewise remember that I was lured into fisticuffs with this unlettered but two-fisted caveman through the wiles of a woman, viz., Blanche Mange, a co-ed who would have caused Nero to throw away his fiddle. With the praiseworthy desire of displaying my prowess to Blanche after she had made me deathly sick raving about Fairless Dougbanks, the movie star, I attacked on the street Young Battling Kid One-Round McWallop, the middleweight champion, and in the picturesque parlance of the ring he knocked me for a row of Chinese

The Rubyat of a Freshman

ashcans. Then this big tramp, as the faculty would say, walked off with Blanche.

Well, pater, I immediately enrolled in Professor McGurk's boxing class, having made up my mind that the moment I became proficient at the manly art I would seek out Young Battling Kid One-Round McWallop and obtain revenge. As at prep school I won my letter at seven up, I anticipated little difficulty in learning the art of "knockin' 'em stiff and makin' 'em like it," as Professor McGurk remarks.

But alas, pater, unlike chemistry, boxing is not a study that can be mastered in half an hour. At the end of my first lesson, or "round," the longest three minutes I have ever spent in my life, I was convinced that boxers, like street cleaners, are born and not made! It would take me too long to set forth here all the various rules and angles to the science, but suffice it to say that the first and most important thing to learn about boxing is to keep from being knocked flat. This most elementary point was the hardest for me to remember. It appears that Professor McGurk hit me with everything but the chapel and dormitories and the only time I laid a glove on him was when we shook hands before the massacre began.

Before going down to the gym for my first lesson, pater, I instructed my room-mate, Lancelot Fishbaum, to take down in shorthand a report of every blow landed by the Professor and myself, just like the sporting writers do at a regular prize fight. You see, I thought that with a

The Rubyat of a Freshman

punch by punch account at hand after my lesson I could study it and find out just what blows I missed and just what punches delivered by Professor McGurk were the most effective and the hardest for me to avoid. Well, pater, I must say that I found my room-mate's account of the first and only round we fought of little value to me as a test book. Here is the way it read:

"Report of boxing contest between Professor Knockout McGurk and Tom Cullen, '24. Round One—McGurk put left to head and right to heart. McGurk hooked his right to the head. McGurk crashed over a wicked left to the jaw. McGurk swung left and right to stomach. McGurk ripped over a right to the nose. McGurk smashed left to wind. McGurk shot right to face. McGurk pumped both hands to body. McGurk slashed right to jaw. McGurk slammed left to mouth. McGurk jabbed right and left to head. McGurk planted right to face. McGurk chopped left to ear. End of First Round."

"What is the idea of all this about McGurk?" I exclaimed to Launcelot Fishbaum, when the medical attendant at the gym said I would live and I had read Launcelot's report. "What did I hit?"

"The floor," said Launcelot Fishbaum, with an asinine grin, "and I'll say you take a mean dive!"

Well, pater, as there appeared to be little chance of me winning back the affection of Blanche Mange through my feats of arms, I turned to my wits. After sitting up all night in silent communion with my brain and a bottle of a

The Rubyat of a Freshman

liquid obtainable at most drug stores now if one knows the prescription clerk and which looks like water but isn't, I assure you, I hit upon a scheme that looked certain to win the lady of my heart, and all that sort of thing. With the three hundred dollars you sent me in your last letter I went out and hired 30 of the roughest, toughest, brawniest and generally blood-thirsty looking cave men that I could find, at ten dollars the each. They were instructed to meet in Outdoor Park at ten o'clock that night and assemble behind the monument to Goofy O'Goldstein, the inventor of the tissue-paper sledge-hammer. I had succeeded in getting Blanche Mange to consent to a final interview before giving me the raspberry and as she and me passed O'Goldstein's Monument the thirty thugs were to spring out as if to attack us. Then, pater, I would lay about me right merrily and knock the entire thirty roughnecks as cold as a pawnbroker's eye and if Blanche didn't fall for me then why I could also knock her—er—that is, well, anyhow, pater, I felt that I had concocted a dude of a scheme.

But alas, ah me and alack a day, who can understand women, pater? Everything went off as advertised. I met Blanche Mange and we walked through Outdoor Park. As we passed Goofy O'Goldstein's Monument the thirty bruisers leaped out with loud yelps and surrounded us. Blanche released a shrill scream and then I began swinging both fists right and left, right and left, right and left, right and—well, anyhow, pater, in less than five minutes the thirty gangsters were piled all over each other at the foot of O'Goldstein's Monument, knocked

The Rubyat of a Freshman

out by your affectionate son—to all intents and purposes. Breathing hard and well satisfied, I turned to Blanche Mange expecting her to throw her arms around my neck and murmur “My hero!” or something to that effect. Instead of that, pater, she regarded me with the greatest of scorn while her eyes flashed with indignation.

“You big brutel” she hissed, to my utter amazement. “The idea of assaulting those in-offensive strangers. Get out of my sight—I loathe a coward!”

With that, pater, she took out her handkerchief and, kneeling down, began wiping off the face of the biggest and toughest looking gunman of the lot!

That was too much for me, pater, and with a wild shriek, I fled. You had better send me five hundred in your next, as I would like to try out the same scheme again, only with **fifty** thugs instead of a paltry thirty.

Your affectionate son,

TOM.

The Elite Garage and Repair Shop

562 Eighth Ave.

Dear Tom:

I got your letter whilst I am in the midst of makin' out my annual income tax report in which I give the Eternal Revenue Department all of the

The Rubyat of a Freshman

jack I made last year, on account of America winnin' the war and bein' gave the privelege of supportin' all Europe and the prohibition enforcement guys, as a reward. It says on the application that if you have any kids over the ages of eighteen you do not get no deductions for 'em unless they happen to be mentally deficient. In case they are cuckoo, you are allowed \$200 off the bill for each maniac callin' you father. Well, Tom, I am puttin' in a claim for the deduction in your case and I am pinnin' your letter to my return to prove that I am entitled to the \$200 off. That's all I have got to say to you this afternoon.

Your lovin'ly father,

PATRICK FRANCIS CULLEN.

BOXING, POETRY, LOVE

Hoorah College,

Dear Dad:

Well pater old dear and all that sort of rot, I suppose you have seen in the newspapers where we defeated Dumbell University in our first inter-collegiate boxing contest by the decisive score of five broken noses and three black eyes to one torn ear and eight badly split lips. The contest was replete (faculty stuff, pater) with knockouts, at least one featuring each bout. I was entered in the 2480 ounce class, or middleweight divi-

The Rubyat of a Freshman

sion to be technical, and fought once, finishing a bang-up second—not **banged** up, as some of the papers have it. True, in some inexplicable manner I obtained a slightly torn ear, a rather discolored eye and my nose has the appearance of having foundered, if you know what I mean, but as Nero was often heard to remark, "One can't make catsup without smashing some tomatoes!" eh, pater? I also notice in idly reading over the press accounts of the two-man Armageddon I personally took part in, the following distortion of facts:

"In the fourth round, MacEinstein (**Dumbell University**), after hitting Cullen (**Hoorah College**) with everything but the ring posts and water bottle, tired of the sport and knocked his victim dead with a poisonous left swing to the stomach."

How perfectly absurd! I assure you, pater, that I was not killed outright, as one or even two would think from reading the above account. I admit that when MacEinstein's left thudded into my astonished mid-section and I slid gracefully to the mat amid the delighted applause of the witnesses, I **did** feel a bit ill. But there is quite a difference between the sick and the dead, pater, as for instance, take Battle Creek and Philadelphia.

However, pater, you perfectly priceless old thing, although I went down to glorious defeat in the boxing debate, I met two of the most charming girls in the wide wide world on the way back in the train. They are twins, pater, and strangely enough they are also sisters and

The Rubyat of a Freshman

by a peculiar coincidence, they were both born on the same day. Fancy that! Joe Heehaw, our baseball captain, introduced me and to say the girls were delighted is putting it untruthfully: Oddly enough, pater, the twins both bear the same last name, viz., "Elkahall," their first names being Ethyl and Methyl, respectively. Never in your life, pater, have you seen two people so identically alike in form and feature as these two girls. Why it's so impossible to tell them apart that I'll wager if Ethyl died they'd bury Methyl and vice versa, whatever that is.

Anyhow, pater, the twins made room for Joe and I, or is it Joe and me? or I and—well, no matter, to continue—we sat in the seat facing them and I was favorably impressed at once by their demeanor. Both sat up stiffly and pulled their skirts down primly, covering their knees with maidenly modesty. They are twenty years old apiece, pater, and enterprising young business women, both being waitresses at Ptomaine Joe's restaurant near the college and where from now on you will be able to find me after classes every day. I hope you will not hold their humble station against them, pater. Remember, Abraham Lincoln was once a rail splitter, yet he afterwards became president of the United States. Of course, I do not expect the girls will ever become president, but—I mean to say that if for example they ever get tired "dealin' 'em off the arm" as they quaintly refer to their art, they will never starve to death as long as Flo Ziegfield continues to stage his Follies every year. I will not attempt to tell you how beautiful they are, pater, but suffice it to say that either one of these

The Rubyat of a Freshman

girls would have made Solomon grit his teeth. The effect of them both together is therefore a bit eh—unnerving!

In answer to Methyl's inquiry regarding my somewhat disarranged features, the result of my recent boxing activities, I told her I had fallen down a flight of stairs and she remarked that I must have tripped at the top floor of the Woolworth Building. This brought a merry laugh from one and all and to change the subject from the personal I remarked on a small volume of Charles Lamb that Ethyl had in her lap.

"Do you like Lamb?" I inquired, pleasantly.

"Oh, I ain't crazy about it," she answered, with a maddening smile. "Still and all it makes a good stew and——"

Joe Heehaw's raucous laughter interrupted her and he turned his attention to Methyl.

"No, no—you misunderstood me," I said, "I refer to the book of poetry you have."

"Oh, this here stuff?" said Ethyl, curling her delicious lip scornfully. "Say, if this is poetry, I'm a Arabian duke! I tried to read some of it, but I don't know what it's all about. I found it on the train and that's where I'm gonna leave it! As a rule, though, I'm very partial to good poetry. I got a whole scrap book full of, now, limericks home, like—eh—"They was a young lady from Russia, who'—well, you know how them things goes. But speakin' of poetry, it runs in our family. I got a cousin which lives in Greenwich Village, New Yawk, and believe me,

The Rubyat of a Freshman

that boy shakes a brutal pen and ink! He's what they call a Futurist pote and every now and then he gets some of his pomes printed in *The Free Love Weekly*, which is published down there. Here's his latest—it's called 'Post Mortem Reverie.' Ain't it a nifty?"

With that, pater, this remarkable and ravishing young woman handed me a clipping which I reproduce in full below:

I'm the merriest corpse in the morgue
I leap from slab to slab;
The ice water trickles down my back
And there's nobody there to blab
Ha, ha, there's nobody there to blab!

"Pick up the marbles, sister, you win!" I said, pater, handing back her cousin's weird couplet. Well, we drew into the station then and we all separated. We made an engagement to go to the movies the following evening, both girls having received an invitation to take an automobile ride instead with a cynical quirk of the lip and the odd expression, "Don't make me laugh!"

Well, pater, there is no more news of a sensational nature and as I have an eight o'clock I will have to bring this missive to a close. Joe Heehaw has insisted on me coming out for the baseball team, so you had better send me at least a hundred in your next as I have got to get a uniform and you know how expensive gold lace is these days.

Your affectionate son

TOM.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

The Elite Garage & Repair Shop

562 Eighth Ave.

Dear Tom:

Well, I was certainly a terribly blow to me, Tom, when I seen in the papers that you got knocked for a row of Chinese ash cans in the inter-collegiate boxin' tourney. You bein' my son, I naturally figured you was unbeatable, with the results that I laid 8 to 5 on you up and down the length and breadth of Eighth Avenue and now I am the laughin' stock of New York and likewise I am four thousand fish in the hole. You big stiff, is they **nothin'** you can finish first at? If you have made up your mind to turn your attention to baseball up there, why you had better simply give one-man exhibition games by yourself as that seems to be about the only way you can win in any contest, unless maybe you can get somebody to play buttin' heads together with you. There is one game in which you couldst beat the world!

As for them twin Alcohol sisters, Ethyl and Methyl, which you have just met, all I got to say is look out for their twin brothers, Wood and Grain, which is travellin' about the country now knockin' all comers for a goal. Between you and the Blue Law guys, Tom, I am gettin' so disgusted that I wouldn't care if Prohibition really **did** come in tomorrow. As it is, they are commencin' to enforce the dry laws right here in New York and pretty soon a man will have to walk five or six blocks before he can get a shot!

The Rubyat of a Freshman

I suppose I am crazy to do this, as the guy said before jumpin' into Niagara Falls, but I am enclosin' here the with a hundred berries. I expect this to last you til indefinitely at the least.

Your lovin'ly father,

PATRICK FRANCIS CULLEN.

P. S.—Don't write them biscuit shooters no letters with a mention of the preposition "love" in it, as I will not under no circumstances pay off if you get sued.

AUTO INTOXICATION—MATRIMONY

Hotel Egraph,

Indianapolis, Ky.

Dear Dad:

Well, prepare for a shock, as the warden confidentially whispered to the condemned convict on the way to the chair, pater. I have so many things to put in this letter that I will probably have to send it by freight. So if you don't receive it, why you might inquire at the railroad station for it. Don't forget to bring it with you to prove that I sent it.

Shock number one, father, is that I am no longer an inmate of Hoorah College. I escaped last week with the full consent and warm, even

The Rubyat of a Freshman

enthusiastic, approval of the faculty. In fact, Dad, they—eh—suggested it. I was sorry to leave in a way, particularly in a way such as I took my departure, but it shows what they think of me when they held special commencement exercises for me alone, during which I was formally pesented with the Royal Raspberry and given the degree of G. O. O. F. Y. This is about five hundred degrees above Zero, pater, and next to Imperial Kleagle it is the highest degree ever bestowed on a human being. Only three men in history have held higher degrees and they are named Percy Q. Thermometer, Ignatius F. Centigrade and Bosco Fahrenheit, respectively.

As I was heard to remark before, padre, I was sorry to leave Hoorah College, but not near as sorry as they were to see me go. The cheering must have awakened people in Brazil. In fact, I was given a send-off fit for a king—one like the Czar of Russia got, for example.

I will carry with me many pleasant memories of dear old Hoorah, papa, where I spent almost a full term as a Frosh and incidentally some five thousand smackers of your money, barely escaping getting an education by the skin of my teeth. While I failed to set the river ablaze on the track, baseball, football, boxing, hockey, basketball or toddle-top teams, I did manage to hang up an intercollegiate record while at Hoorah, by graduating from college while still a Freshman.

Shock number two, Dad, is that within a fortnight—whatever **that** is—I am sailing for the Sahara Desert where I am going to work in a

The Rubyat of a Freshman

gondola factory. Either that, or I will join a friend who is going to South Africa to trap diamonds. I will have to do one or the other, pater, or Ethyl and me will be the best dressed couple in the local poor house. I owe a bill at ye inn here, the total of which sounds like the round-trip fare by taxi to the Moon and if one dollar would buy the Atlantic Ocean I couldn't purchase enough water to put in an eye-dropper. I haven't even got the price of a postage stamp and in order to mail this letter I will have to wait until nobody is looking and then drop it in the mail box without the stamp. That brings us up to shock number three.

Shock number three, *mon pere*, is—eh—take a good grip on yourself, pater old dear, and remember, no gentleman swears—shock number three is that I am a respectable married man! From a Bachelor of Arts I have become a Benedict of Parts. Eh—ain't we got fun, eh, father?

I take it for granted that by this time you have sufficiently recovered to continue reading, so I will proceed to the events that lead up to my sudden and unexpected graduation from Hoorah College and my equally sudden and unexpected leap into the popular pastime of matrimony.

You may remember in my last letter, padre, I told you how Joe Heehaw and myself had met two of the most charming girls in the wide, wide world, viz, the Elkahall twins, Ethyl and Methyl, respectably. Both being waitresses at Ptomaine Joe's restaurant and both being so beautiful that

The Rubyiat of a Freshman

either one would have made Napoleon forget about Waterloo. Father, there are either 650 or 2500 students of the noted masculine gender at Hoorah College, garnished with about one or three hundred professors and inside of a month the breath-taking twins had 186 fraternity pins, 50 class rings, 76 engagement rings, 2499 letters and 36 autographed diplomas. The co-eds were on the verge of suicide until your clever son broke up the combination by marrying one of the Heavenly twins.

When I first met Ethyl, dad, I had no more idea that she would win me for a husband than you have of being mistaken for Gamaliel Harding. Being young, handsome and of an arresting presence, I have naturally had the five or six hundred thousand affairs that every student is supposed to have at a co-educational college, but like measles, none of them were serious. But with Ethyl it was all different. Father, I haunted Pto-mainie Joe's and ate ham and eggs served by Ethyl's fair hands until the sight of a pig or a chicken (of the cooking variety) gives me convulsions!

Don't think for a second, pater, that simply because Ethyl was a waitress that she is of poor family connections, social or otherwise. Her father, Wood Elkahall, became famous over night with his book on the care of hens' teeth and her brother, Grane Elkahall, has been cheer leader for a correspondence school for the last 64 years. So you see, she **means** something. Joe Heehaw had the inside track with Ethyl for awhile, dad,

The Rubyat of a Freshman

because his father is a well-to-do millionaire, but when Ethyl heard that my father ran a New York City garage, why she dismissed Joe Heehaw as a piker!

But I will stop these ramblings, pere, and get to the events leading up to my marriage to Ethyl Elkahall and also my dismiss—eh—my sudden graduation from Hoorah College when my sentence still had three years to run.

Well, the other night, Joe Heehaw, who became strongly attached to Methyl when Ethyl threw him over in my favor, suggested that we take the girls for a ride in his Sily Six. The girls were nothing loath, dad, and I was nothing loath, so about eight o'clock of a beautiful, moonlit evening we climbed aboard Joe's long, low and rakish sportster, stepped on the gas and slid out into the open country. We had put somewhere between 20 and 150 miles behind us when the car suddenly came to a stop. The girls each allowed a beautifully modulated shriek to escape them, as the place we stopped at was a bit off the main road, very dark and heavily wooded. He could not have picked a better—eh—I mean to say—eh—well, at any rate, dad, with a muffled exclamation and a sly dig in my ribs, Joe climbed down, lifted the hood and pattered around with the engine for a minute. Finally, he looked up and shook his head.

"I've lost the gaffunkus somewhere along the road!" he said, "I guess we'll have to—eh—sit here and wait until another car comes along and maybe I can get a tow back to town."

The Rubyat of a Freshman

Dad, the girls looked at each other with a sort of meaning smile.

"What I can't understand," remarked Methyl, after a pause, "is that every time I take an automobile ride with one of you college guys, the car breaks down right at this spot!"

"Yes," said Ethyl, a bit grimly, I fancied, "but we always manage to get the car going again inside of a minute! You might as well come back in here and start the motor, Joseph, it's too late——"

"Try it yourself," Joe interrupted with a grin, "I'm not kidding—the motor has committed suicide!"

Both Ethyl and Methyl tried the starter and the etc, father, but without avail. At length, Methyl walks over beside Joe, peers in under the hood, looks at him for a minute and then climbs back into the car.

"Well, we'll wait a few minutes and see if some one don't come along," she said, demurely.

Dad, you must have been young yourself once, far ever away and long ago, and you can understand perhaps, the effect of the moonlight and the woods upon two young and beautiful nymphs like Ethyl and Methyl and two young and love-sick fauns like me and Joe. We talked about this and we talked about that and whispered sweet nothings into each other's ears and a milk wagon coming along the road at 4 a. m. was the first thing to apprise us that the evening had indeed fled.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

Well, father, we were now in a serious predicament and no mistake. In the first place, we cannot get into our dormitories after 10 p. m. and in the second place, both the girls lodge at Pto-main Joe's and he watches them like a hawk, which by the way, is what he resembles. Wildly infatuated with—eh—both of the beautiful twins, he has threatened them more than once for going out with us. Here we are endless miles from town and the auto as dead as Colombus! What to do? What to do?

"Well, Joe," said Methyl to Joe Heehaw, "take those spark plugs out of your pocket, put them back on the motor and we'll go away from here!"

"What!" cried Ethyl. "Is that why the car wouldn't start?"

"Certainly," smiled her charming sister, "I saw him take the spark plugs off the engine when we stopped that time. . . ."

Sheepishly, Joe replaced the plugs, dad, and in about half an hour we rumble up outside Pto-maine Joe's restaurant. It is nearly six in the morning and like the night before Christmas, "not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse." Then the girls discovered that neither of them had a key. So as not to disturb their employer by ringing the bell, pater, I was endeavoring to break down the door when it was suddenly flung open and Ptomaine Joe stood before us, his face contorted with rage, jealousy and St. Vitus dance, with which he is afflicted.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

With an oath that would have made a long-shoreman cry "Shamel" padre, Ptomaine Joe began reviling the girls for staying out all night with what he sacrilegiously referred to as "A couple of them college dumbbells!" This was too much for my overwrought nerves! I decided to protect Ethyl's fair name and also demonstrate with one stroke the fact that a college boy can be as rough and tough as the next one, when forced to be by circumstances.

"Don't you dare speak that way to my wife!" I said easily, and knocked him flat with a well-timed punch on the nose.

Joe Heehaw then reached down and dragged the unhappy restaurateur to his feet. Ptomaine Joe was in a state best described as "goofy," father, and he gazed around wildly, seemingly not knowing what it was all about. Joe Heehaw shook him.

"You know the way you just spoke to that other boy's wife?" he asked, coldly.

Ptomaine Joe nodded, dazedly.

"Well, sir," said Joe Heehaw, courteously, "don't you dare speak that way to my wife, either!" And, dad, he stretched Ptomaine Joe out on the ground again, with a beautiful left hook.

The next day, pater, Ptomaine Joe had to go and blab to the faculty and that's how I came to

The Rubyat of a Freshman

graduate from Hoorah College while still a Freshman.

Oh, yes—I forgot about me being married. You remember in the first part of this letter, dad, I wrote that one night Joe Heehaw suggested we take the girls for an automobile ride? Well, we had just been married—the four of us—when Joseph made that suggestion. A bit romantic and that sort of thing, what?

Your affectionate son,

TOM.

P. S. The beastly landlord has just rapped on the door of our love nest, father, and informed me that if I don't pay my bill by the end of the week he will have me arrested. The bill is \$387.50. If you will send the \$387.00, pater, I am sure I can raise the fifty cents on Ethyl's engagement ring.

TOM.

The Elite Garage & Repair Shop

562 Eighth Ave.

Dear Tom:

When I first read your letter it took four men to hold me and it's a good thing I can't throw a sledge hammer from here to Indianapolis, or you wouldst of passed away from concussion of the dome five minutes after I open the envelope.

The Rubyat of a Freshman

I am sendin' you five hundred fish. Pay the hotel bill, pack your cigarette case and come back here as soon as immediately. If they's no way out of it, bring your child bride with you. I guess you wasn't cut out to be no college man, or anything else either, but maybe you are simple enough to run this garage and gimme chance to get a slight vacation. As for the matrimonial escapade, we'll see about that part of it. Like as not I can get it cancelled on the grounds that you was cuckoo when you done it. I don't even need a lawyer. I can prove to any jury in the world that you are crazy by simply showin' them your letters!

Yours father,

PATRICK FRANCIS CULLEN.

